NEW SERIES: NO. 2—JUNE, 1895.

# THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM.

ISSUED BY DIRECTION AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

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WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, President.

Each Member can send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members should be careful to write on only one side of the paper and to use black ink.

All communications should be addressed to the The Editor, Theosophical FORUM, 144 Madison Avenue, New York City.

Entered as second-class matter at New York Post-office.
Issued monthly.

WITH LAST month's issue the FORUM entered upon a new life and era. The former editor has withdrawn from the Society, and has no more any connection with this periodical; henceforth it will be issued from the office of the President and under his direction.

All students are invited to send in replies or questions on theosophical subjects.

The FORUM will be sent in future directly to each member, and all are requested to read it with attention so that suggestions may be made tending to render it of greater value to members, and perhaps even to Branches. It will in a sense, though as yet not officially, be the organ of the Society for notices, changes, news and other matter.

Some changes will be observed. The form is different from the old; there will be a department consisting of two pages to contain four subjects for a month's syllabus for any Branch desiring to use it. A news page will be added if enough matter comes forward to fill the space. Editorial treatment of topics by W. Q. J., C. F. W., and others who hold similar views, will also vary from the past; and as to this it can now be observed that if the treatment of several subjects shall seem inconsistent with what was said in the old series, the inconsistency will be due to a present more definite and rigorous application of theosophical theories to

the questions in hand rather than the mechanical and narrow view formerly obtaining.

It is particularly requested that whenever an assertion is made that such and such is a doctrine, or "it is said in theosophical literature", and the like, the citation of author, article, volume, and page be given. This natural rule is constantly overlooked.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, *President.*

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QUESTION 9.

*If India is the birthplace of the Theosophical philosophy, and if the Hindûs have more natural capacities for occult knowledge than we, should we not accept those of them who come here and offer themselves as our teachers rather than waste time at Branch meetings in discussing questions concerning which we really know but little?*

*W. Q. Judge.*—Doubtless India is now the most ancient storehouse of Aryan philosophy which may be called theosophical—but no one is able to say that it is the birthplace. Egypt with its tremendous civilization, its philosophy and magic, is silent, and there is no one to put forward its claim. Beyond question also, the Hindûs of to-day have more metaphysical acumen than we have. But the West is creeping up. And intellectual, metaphysical gifts are not spiritual gifts. We have all the intellect we need, active and latent. The Hindû of to-day is a talker, a hair-spliter, and when he has not been altered by contact with Western culture he is superstitious. Such we do not want as teachers. We will hail them as brothers and co-workers but not as our Magisters. But those Hindûs who come here are not teachers. They have come here for some personal purpose and they teach no more nor better than is found in our own theosophical literature: their yoga is but half or quarter yoga, because if they knew it they would not teach a barbarian Westerner. What little yoga they do teach is to be read at large in our books and translations.

The craze for present-day India is an eminently foolish one. If one will calmly examine the facts he will find the nation as a whole superstitious to the last degree; the few theosophists and Englishised ones being but as a drop in the ocean. It is not a united nation and cannot itself help the West. For centuries it has helped no one outside itself. As a whole—there are grand exceptions—the Brahmans keep up the superstition and proud isolation. We have the words of Master K.H.—an Indian—that India is

spiritually degraded. Fakirs and wonder-workers and hypnotisers do not prove spirituality. It is the destiny of India to hold as a storehouse good things to come out later; the West, as newest, youngest, and hence least degraded spiritually, has to work and learn so as to help the East.

And the questioner speaking only of India seems to forget great Tibet and all Buddhist countries. What of those? What of their ignorance and superstition? Is India to be talked of alone, and all these others left out? It is time to call a halt, and for theosophists to broaden their conception of what and where the East is, and to stop talking as if the sun in the morning shone only on India.

*Dr. J. D. Buck.*—It is true that as a race the Hindûs are metaphysical and take more naturally to philosophical questions than any other race. But it is also true that materialism has for many generations been making inroads on their philosophy which was once spiritual and pure. Moreover the old religion held by the people at large owing to the age and servility of the race, long ago degenerated into superstition. Hence while the aptitude of the race for metaphysics still holds they have by this very means and the other causes above named often wandered far from the truth, lost the clue to the original pure, spiritual doctrines, and become hopelessly entangled in a labyrinth of endless speculations, that lead them further from the truth. It therefore happens, that a western-born person who has got rid of his materialism and is not involved in the superstitions and wild mythology of the East can more easily grasp the true spiritual philosophy than a Hindû who is still attached to his mythology. Superficial thinkers will be caught by the glamor, and be carried off their feet by the craze for Indian thought, but there are scores of earnest students of the *Secret Doctrine* in the West who know far more of the real Secret Wisdom (Gûpta Vidya) than the average Hindû, be he priest or layman. There are thousands of Brahmans to-day who will insist that the degraded and degrading doctrine of Metempsychosis is the true doctrine of Reïncarnation, instead of being its degraded remains, and they will insist that there is no other and more rational doctrine. I should say, therefore, that it would be unsafe and unwise to follow any teacher because of his race, color, or religion, and that nowhere is careful discrimination more necessary than just here. Therefore, it is entirely unsafe to follow any teacher simply because he is a Hindû; and the metaphysical character of the Hindû offers quite

as many dangers as advantages, quite as often leads the student astray as toward the light.

*Dr. E. B. Guild.*—The antiquity of the "Theosophical Philosophy" antedates the infancy of the Indian peoples. The Brahman and Buddhist Sects are an outgrowth of some of the teachings of the Philosophy, not the originators of it. The Brahmans and Buddhists are *sects* and do not comprise the Theosophical Philosophy in its entirety, as a part cannot include the whole. To accept a representative of Brahmanism as a teacher is to receive a part where we should receive the whole truth. The Hindûs may be well skilled in occultism, but can they present to the western mind that phase of occultism which will be so assimilated as to prove conducive to the attainment of spirituality? The true occultist becomes—he is not made. He must *become* through his own environment, through his own Karma, as a result of his own attainment. An exotic growth under anomalous conditions does not give firmness of texture nor strength of fibre. It is not exuberance of growth that is desirable but the sure though slow development in natural surroundings.

The most serious menace to the Theosophical Movement in the West is psychism. Psychic powers attained *through knowledge* may become strong elements in the evolution of spirituality. Psychic powers sought and acquired for themselves retard spiritual evolution and divert energy and effort from spiritual and personal attainment.

The necessities of our evolution do not require that we attempt to dress a senile sect in the habiliments of western energy. Western minds do not need the psychism of the Brahmans, but that self-knowledge which will make psychic powers helps to the attainment of spirituality only.

Self-study and self-effort are not time "wasted" but will bring about an evolution which can never be attained by becoming the tail to any sectarian kite.

Knowledge must come as a result of *individual* effort. Branch work develops the individual thinker. It is better to be an active worker than a passive hearer. It is better to *think* than to *feel.*

### QUESTION 10.

*Is it possible to live "in the world" and act as an ordinary person and yet be an occultist? Must not one retire into solitude for this?*

*M. K. L. Leonard.*—An occultist is one in whom the activity of the physical nature has been so regulated and controlled that the perceptions and powers of the soul have become fully developed. The reason that any man is not an occultist is because he does not live in conscious harmony with the occult, spiritual laws of life. It is the abnormal activity of the animal nature which prevents this harmony. No man can serve two masters. Either the body or the soul must be the active, dominant power. The body is the instrument through which man perceives the physical world, which represents separation and therefore selfishness. The soul is the instrument through which man perceives the spiritual side of nature, which represents unity and therefore selflessness. The physical faculties cannot look upon this occult, spiritual side of nature, and the man who is wholly guided by these faculties never perceives the true laws of being. In the man who stills the turbulence of the animal the soul may develop and thus knowledge of occult law begin to unfold. Hence it follows that the practice of unselfishness is the foundation of the growth of the soul.

It will be observed that the duties and trials of life seem to be carefully arranged to expose the small weaknesses of the nature. If one steadfastly perform his duties and meet patiently all trials selfishness will gradually disappear. But if a man isolate himself from the world the weakness and narrowness of his nature will never be corrected. The personality will not be conquered. Its energy will simply be deflected and it will strengthen the personality on the astral and psychic planes. Selflessness is the gateway to occultism, and the world of daily duties is the battlefield wherein the victory over self is obtained.

*M. H. Wade.*—According to Madame Blavatsky "Occultism is the Science of Life, the Art of Living." She also tells us that Chelaship, by which is meant the binding of oneself to live as far as possible in accord with one's higher nature, "has nothing whatever to do with means of substenance or anything of the kind, for a man can isolate his mind entirely from his body and its surroundings. Chelaship is a *state of mind* rather than a life according to hard and fast rules on the physical plane."

Thus we see that comprehensively Occultism is *doing one's duty*, whenever and however and wherever that duty shall present itself. It may fall to the lot of the occultist to frequent the crowded throughfares of life, to be subjected to constant intercourse with his fellows, to be surrounded with business cares,

and continually the petty and insignificant details of social and family life must needs be attended to; and yet through it all he may grow and develop in strength and power.

In so far as one can free himself from interest in the *results* of his actions, directing his energy to their right performance only, will he advance along the path of occultism. The would-be occultist must have opportunity, therefore, to develop strength, to free himself from personal interests, ambitions, hopes and fears, and such opportunities can be offered him, such experience gained, only by active work and intercourse with his fellow men. For in Occultism, understand, it is the *state of mind* that is concerned, not the conditions in which we find ourselves placed. And thus the highest test of an occultist is the ability which he can manifest to hold himself calm and unruffled in the midst of cares and temptations which would disturb the equilibrium of a weak or impassioned nature.

The occultist therefore may in the eyes of the world be leading the busiest of lives; he may have but a few moments of the day which he can call his own. Yet, taking rest in his higher and Divine nature, he lives in as great seclusion as though he were shut within the walls of a monastery or dwelling in haunts untrodden by his fellow men.

QUESTION 11.

*What is the occult significance of the Cross? What is the meaning of the "death on the Cross?"*

*Burcham Harding.*—The true occult significance of the "death on the cross" as referring to Humanity seems to be *initiation*. There is a distinct line of demarcation between each of the kingdoms of nature, to pass which in ascent from one to another is an initiation. All men are consciously or unconsciously gaining progress and experience in their successive earth lives, fitting themselves to pass their next initiation. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The "Adam" in man is the human nature, which must be completely crucified and die before the initiation into the "Christ" can take place. The "Adam" or animal nature in man is the result of evolution in this world. The life principle passes through all forms of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, gaining progress and development in each, adding experience to experience. The culmination of this line of physical evolution is man's mortal body and desires, which synthesize all that exists

in the lower kingdoms of nature in this world and links him to the universal soul of physical nature—the astral light.

The "Christ" in man is the individualised spiritual entity or soul, which is brought to this world by Karma. Its object is twofold—to gain the experience of this world, and to spiritualise the "Adam" bodies of man. It does not tediously pass through each of the lower kingdoms *seriatim*, but at once enters the human form, which synthesizes all nature. By this experiencing all conditions of life, the "Christ" gradually conquers and subdues the "Adam."

The "death on the cross" signifies the entire conquest of the "Adam" by the "Christ," when the initiation of the human into the divine takes place. Religions have adopted this symbol, as it shows the "binding back" of the lower nature to the higher—the return of the soul to its original purity.

*Claude Falls Wright.*—The cross signified in all occult orders the two powers or forces of matter—positive and negative The symbols used to signify Matter and Spirit are many, according to the manifestations of these principles, and while matter *passive* is symbolized by the circle, matter *active*, in its highest stage of activity and just before entire fructification by the Spirit, is symbolized by the cross, under its varying forms. This was no arbitrary symbol. To the ancient thinkers the Deity geometrized, manifesting every state of being in mathematical form; and the cross stands to-day as the clearest representation of that condition of mind, soul and body of beings about to be "born again," or invested with the power of the Spirit. For it signifies a centre where forces from opposite directions meet and cut one another. Matter when over-shadowed by Spirit is thrown into a state of activity, and a number of powers or forces pass and repass in it; and where these cut there is formed a centre or cross, a star from which may be radiated in matter the reflected power of the Spirit itself. Evolution, the effect of the active Spirit, throws out in nature different beings gradually approaching the cross form according to development; and at last man, type of his suffering and pain, is produced, the most perfect emblem of this, as illustrated by the Egyptians, Caldeans and others in their symbology.

The "death on the cross" meant the death of the soul or animal personality in man, necessary in order that the Cross should be transformed into the Star. It is when the student has reached that point of development where he feels the spiritual and

psychic powers opposing one another that, if he preserves his balance and permits the animal to die, the mystical veil of the temple may for him be rent and the lower human soul complete its union with its spiritual self.

The early Christians placed a man on the cross, thus doubling the symbol, and to some extent destroying it. With the Gnostics the Spirit was symbolized as a pyramid or triangle, that being the mathematical equivalent of fire—the physical manifestation of the Deity. This was taken from the pyramidal form assumed by fire, as it rises upwards and disappears. It is retained to-day by the Christians in the church spires. The three nails in the man placed on the cross—one through either hand and the third through his feet—signified the crucified soul, the mystical triangle here being inverted as symbolical of the lower or reflected self.

As the type of the soul or self, Jesus is crucified between the passions and the aspirations (the two thieves) going only with the higher thief to Paradise or Nirvana.

In the Mysteries, and while undergoing purification and rebirth, the human body was actually laid with the arms outstretched in the form of a cross in the lower temple or crypts of the halls of the Initiates for three days, while the freed soul communed with the Deity. At the end of the period the soul reëntered the body and arose a divine man. This is the allegory of the divine burial and resurrection.

### QUESTION 12.

*How can a Theosophist, under the present conditions, be most serviceable to the cause?*

*H. T. Patterson.*—That depends on who the Theosophist is, where he is and what his abilities and knowledge are. It often happens that sincere, loyal and earnest people in their desire to do something do that very thing which ought not to be done. On a vessel, in imminent danger, the captain and crew have, in one sense, a less trying position than the passengers. The former have their duties and responsibilities and so are, to a certain extent, prevented from thinking of the impending disaster. The latter have nothing to distract their attention from the peril of the situation and for that reason must draw a fortitude of another kind, which, perhaps, requires the greater strength. But in the cause of humanity none are, or should be, merely passengers. Each one has his special task, even if small, and upon the faith-

fulness with which this task is performed is the well-being of all served. Reliability in all enterprises is an absolutely essential factor. It does not matter altogether what we do, but it does matter that we should do well what we undertake to do. If we say that we cannot write papers, that we cannot talk, that we cannot present Theosophy satisfactorily to inquirers, and that all we can do is to give our support in countenancing the movement by attending meetings, then let us attend those meetings as though the salvation of humanity depended upon it. If we do this much only, the way will begin to open. We may not be able to contribute five cents a month in money, but we can be steadfast in the moral support given to those who work, and contribute by our presence to their courage and energy. Then some little thing will fall in our way. It may be never so little at the start, but it is a beginning. If we stand this first test then more will be given to us; and later yet more. This may all sound like a mere repetition of what has been said over and over again, both outside and inside the Theosophical Society, but it is the truth. The helpful things in life are not the brilliant, startling or phenomenal ones, but those that are simple and too often despised. Reliability in these bring opportunity in the others. One thing more: Always and under everything must be the utter and complete devotion one to another. Not a sentimental nor conspicuous behavior, but the deeper current of helpfulness and loyalty. This force though unseen and often unsuspected passes through our ranks, giving, more often than we think, strength and vital energy not only to those in the thick of the contest, but to many a weak and crippled one fallen in the rear ranks.

### QUESTION 13.

*Hindû books lay great stress on the value of sitting in certain positions in order to gain greater insight during practices of meditation and the like. What real value is to be attached to this? Should one sit cross-legged during meditations? What is the actual philosophy of posturing?*

*Claude Falls Wright.*—It is perfectly true that most, if not all, of the exoteric occult books of India do speak of practices of this kind as being of great assistance in yoga. But we must remember that the exoteric books do not have the inner occult teachings. They constitute only that which was given to the masses and which the masses, then more developed however than

the generality of men are in the present day, could comprehend. But it has been well-known for a long time that even the highest among the Brahmans have not the inner teachings, but by their spiritual selfishness have been barred from thus attaining. The exoteric books teach hatha yoga to a very large extent; with, perhaps, the exception of the purely philosophical works, and these do not teach any system of yoga. It has been distinctly said again and again in the raja yoga and secret occult schools beyond the Himalayas, that posturing is not necessary—"all that is necessary is to find the position in which the body can most easily sit or repose for a long time." Such practices as a whole moreover, are not good generally, and unless they are natural to the student they lead his attention away from the higher insight, being a mere ceremony or external action.

The philosophy of posturing springs from a knowledge of the action and reäction of the occult finer forces of the body. It is certainly true, if one knows what he is doing, that by placing the physical form in certain positions, mental and other effects may ensue. A simple example of the fact that these currents exist is to be found in the fact that in imagination, or when trying to remember, one throws his head back, putting the brain in a direct line with certain tatwic forces; whereas when trying to analyze or to work out some difficult problem, the head is naturally bent down and the brain placed at right angles to these occult currents so as to cross them. Almost all the actions of the body, either reflex or unconscious, are the result of the play of the occult forces. The sitting cross-legged originally was supposed to have amongst other effects, that of shutting off all the activity of the lower nature and leaving active only that phase of the physical and astral bodies' psychic power from the solar plexus to the brain.

But posturing is not for our nation because we are not used to it, and in any case is only a help. The true yogi is he who can mediate in any position and at any time. He does not need to go away to the jungle or to leave men, but even while he works and labors and is among his brothers he ever has before him that ideal of spirituality and freedom necessary for the eventual perfection of his being. It is said that some of the highest adepts are more often to be found in the ball room than under the Bo-tree. And this is very likely to be true, for they would very much rather be with man and helping him than leave him to himself. Still for some adepts it is also better for their work that they should live in solitude.

# SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.

FOR THE USE OF BRANCHES.

## THE THREE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

(1.) *Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions whatever.* Why no distinctions? Brotherhood in all kingdoms of nature. The true meaning of caste. Relation of West to East. Relation of man to animals, and animals to man. Difference between Christian and Theosophical ideas of Brotherhood. One Universal Spirit underlying all manifestations. Theosophy works to change man's inner nature rather than to arrange for socialistic communities or to give him food and clothing. The latter work, however, necessary also to help those thrown down by Karma.

(2.) *Study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences; demonstration of the importance of such study.* How best to study these. Ancient religions are the remnants of ancient occult bodies. The Aryan philosophy. Has the Theosophical Movement begun with the Theosophical Society? Proper conception of God. Modern Science tending to reflect the teachings of ancient Wisdom. The East the store-house of wisdom. India has much of it, but the Hindûs do not understand their own philosophy. Vedas the oldest books of the Aryan race. Why should Theosophists understand and study Buddhism? Necessity and importance of investigating the origin of Christianity so as to destroy priestcraft, error and superstition. Work of the Theosophical Society in this field.

(3.) *Investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and psychical powers latent in man.* All signs and thought tending in this direction. The object of the Theosophical Society is to investigate, not to experiment. Only students of occultism can comprehend the laws of nature. All Theosophists not Occultists. Hypnotism, mental telepathy, mediumship and psychic feats to be avoided by the student who seeks higher wisdom. Why is this? Necessity for the Theosophical Society to explain modern discoveries in this field by the ancient Occult Wisdom.

REFERENCES.

*Five Years of Theosophy*, art. "What is Theosophy?"; *Modern Theosophy*, chap. v; *Convention Report Theosophical Society in America*, April 1895; *Ocean of Theosophy*, chap. xvi.

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## THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

*Three principles; Atma, Buddhi, Manas.* Called the Higher Triad: the Monad:

Âtma; the Spirit; the Higher Self. Meaning of the word. Is part of man, yet universal. Can you say "mine" or "thine" of it? Basis of all manifested nature. The Higher Self cannot manifest without Buddhi, its vehicle. It is to man as Brahma is to the universe.

Buddhi. Atma-Buddhi, the monad not self-conscious. Atma-Buddhi in minerals, plants and animals, as well as man. Buddhi called the spiritual soul. Cannot exist without Atma. It is the vehicle or first veil of Atma. Atma-Buddhi passes through all kingdoms of nature and only when it succeeds in evolving the man stage, becomes self-conscious or manasic. The most mystical of all the principles. Buddhi, the spiritual Will.

Manas. Two phases, higher and lower. Higher, Manas linked with Buddhi. Lower, Manas linked with Kama. Buddhi-Manas and Kama-Manas. Self-consciousness in man. Lower Manas the lower self. Lower Manas joined to Kama and the astral body, the personality. How can the lower Manas be united with the higher? Lower Manas a ray of the higher Manas. Called the Father and Son. Have animals Manas? How did Manas originate in the human kingdom? Secret Doctrine teachings concerning the Pitris (Fathers).

State the relation of Atma-Buddhi-Manas to the fourfold lower man.

REFERENCES.

*Ocean of Theosophy*, chap. iv and vii; *Key to Theosophy*, sec. iv and x; *Esoteric Buddhism; Modern Theosophy*, chap. iv.

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## OCCULTISM.

Meaning of term. Difference between the occult arts and true occultism. Chelaship and adeptship. Necessity for understanding the true meaning of occultism so as to avoid foolish ideas about this. Occultists in all ages; mentioned in Bible and other sacred books. True occultism consists in understanding the inner workings of mind and soul and not in psychic experiments. Occult schools in the East. The West the future of occult science. Great school of Occultism forming in America. No initiates in India, as Mme. Blavatsky taught. No value in running after personalities; the student must find his spiritual teacher in himself. Difference between modern Christian teaching and the ancient occultism of the followers of the Christos. Necessity for purity and aspiration and meditation in order to achieve any occult knowledge. Theosophical Society an occult movement. One must understand the philosophy of Theosophy before he can advance.

REFERENCES.

*Lucifer*, vol. iii, No. 14, art. "Lodges of Magic"; *Voice of the Silence; T.P.S.* 7, "Occultism *versus* the Occult Arts."

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## SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

Difference between the two. The elementaries of the *séance* rooms not the souls of the dead. Spiritualists the great materializers of spiritual things. "Spirits" an improper term; only one Spirit. What is the cause of the manifestations? Philosophy of this. No student of occultism will attend *séance* rooms on account of astral currents and evil influences. The "worship of the dead." The medium is the opposite end of the pole of development to the occultist. The occultist controls, the medium is controlled. All religions legislated against the raising of the dead. Called sorcery. Mediumship the main tendency to be conquered by western occult students. Summerland, a wrong and pernicious philosophy. Explain why. Difference between the calm of yoga and the excitement arising from communications from the dead. Evils resulting from spiritualism.

REFERENCES.

*Ocean of Theosophy*, chap. xii and xvii; *Key to Theosophy*, sec. ix; *Path*, iv, 134; "Worship of the Dead".

# THEOSOPHICAL NEWS.

Los Angeles Branch has passed resolutions similar to those of the Loyalty T.S. printed in last month's Forum.

Loyalty Branch, Chicago, has now a headquarters at Room 20, 15 Washington Street, corner of Wabash Avenue.

A. H. Spencer of the Aryan T.S. and Clark Thurston visited the H.P.B. T.S. in London on Saturday, May 25th, and gave an account of the April Convention. Much interest and enthusiasm was manifested.

Bulwer Lytton T.S. is doing good work and having increased interest. Books are sold all the time in Rapid City and its seems impossible to keep enough *Ocean of Theosophy* and other works on hand. A new hall is about to be hired, for the audiences at meetings increase daily.

The Maschmedt Farm, Corinth, Saratoga Co., N. Y., started two years ago as a Theosophical resort, will be open again this summer. Theosophists from all parts of the country will therefore once more have opportunity of meeting one another socially during the hot months at this cool and delightful gathering-place.

News comes from Ireland that Bro. Clark Thurston, President of the Providence T.S., has paid a visit to the Dublin Branch and was present at the drafting of a Constitution for "The Theosophical Society in Great Britain and Ireland." Several lodges in the British Isles have already accepted this Constitution.

One of the new features of Theosophical development is the growing interest manifested by the churches. In everyone of the cities visited by Mr. Burcham Harding on his New England lecture tour last month, viz., Springfield, Northampton, Westfield, Easthampton, Greenfield, Hudson, Marlboro, Stoughton and Framington, churches were placed at his disposal without charges.

Lynn Branch, Mass., has secured a "Labor Church" for the purpose of holding public meetings. In this hall very lively meetings have been held weekly during the past month. The attendance averages 250 persons. The lecturers have been supplied from Boston. The Lynn Branch consists of only eight members, yet it has thus succeeded in stirring up wide interest. The example of this Branch might be copied in other centres where lecturers can be secured. The collections cover the cost.

From all over the country come requests to the President's office to have the perpetual circularizing that is going on, stopped. Some members of the Theosophical Society, hardly Theosophists, seem to think nothing of breaking up active centres all over the world simply to prove that their views on a certain subject are the correct ones. The interruption of work, the sowing of discord, and the spread of bad opinion about the Theosophical Society itself, seem to be nothing so that they are proved right. If it were not that there are many more Theosophists in the Society more interested in work than in gossip and slander, much damage might have been done; as it is, most persons are very tired of these missiles and only want now to be left alone so that some good work can be done.

SOME HYPER-CONSCIENTIOUS secretaries think they are morally bound to give out to the members of their Branch every offensive circular and document placed in their hands or sent to them. A secretary is not bound to do anything of the kind unless specially ordered by his Branch to do so. He is appointed officially to keep the records of his Branch, to act as its scribe, and otherwise to transact official business for it and as instructed. He has to distribute official documents from the Headquarters of the Society to which his Branch is affiliated, but the distribution of disruptive and other documents from outsiders is no more a part of his duty than would be the distribution or the reading at Branch meetings of every patent medicine advertisement or fake astrological circular sent him as secretary.

HAWAII LODGE, Honolulu, continues to hold regular weekly meetings and has been reading *Modern Theosophy* and the theosophical manuals. The rooms are open every Sunday afternoon for use of the library, which is a very comprehensive one. On White Lotus Day the Branch rooms were beautifully decorated by the lady members of the Hawaii and Aloha Branches and a photograph of the decoration was sent to the Headquarters here. The photograph has been framed and is in the Headquarters' room. Vocal and instrumental music was furnished by members of both Branches, and a large audience was present. The interest in Theosophy in Honolulu is mainly due to the work of Mrs. Mercie M. Thirds who visited the islands in September and October, 1894.

FOLLOWING is a copy of a letter from the Executive Committee to be read at the forthcoming European Convention, on July 4th.

*From the Theosophical Society in America to the European Theosophists, in Convention Assembled as, "The European Section of the Theosophical Society."*

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:—We send you our fraternal greeting, and fullest sympathy in all works sincerely sought to be performed for the good of Humanity. Separated though we are from you by very great distance we are none the less certain that you and we, as well as all other congregations of people who love Brotherhood, are parts of that great whole denominated The Theosophical Movement, which began far back in the night of Time and has since been moving through many and various peoples, places and environments. That grand work does not depend upon forms, ceremonies, particular persons or set organizations,—"Its unity throughout the world does not consist in the existence and action of any single organization, but depends upon the similarity of work and aspiration of those in the world who are working for it." Hence organizations of theosophists must vary and change in accordance with place, time, exigency and people. To hold that in and by a sole organization for the whole world is the only way to work would be boyish in conception and not in accord with experience or nature's laws.

Recognizing the foregoing, we, who were once the body called The American Section of the T.S., resolved to make our organization, or merely outer form for government and administration, entirely free and independent of all others; but retained our theosophical ideals, aspirations, aims and objects, continuing to be a part of the theosophical movement. This change was an inevitable one, and perhaps will ere long be made also by you as well as by others. It has been and will be forced, as it were, by nature itself under the sway of the irresistible law of human development and progress.

But while the change would have been made before many years by us as an inevitable and logical development, we have to admit that it was hastened by reason of what we considered to be strife, bitterness and anger existing in other Sections of the theosophical world which were preventing us from doing our best work in the field assigned to us by Karma. In order to more quickly free ourself from these obstructions we made the change in this, instead of in some later, year. It is, then, a mere matter of government and has nothing to do with theosophical propaganda or ethics, except that it will enable us to do more and better work.

Therefore we come to you as fellow-students and workers in the field of theosophical effort, and holding out the hand of fellowship we again declare the complete unity of all theosophical workers in every part of the world. This you surely cannot and will not reject from heated, rashly-conceived counsels, or from personalities indulged in by anyone, or from any cause whatever. To reject the proffer would mean that you reject and nullify the principle of Universal Brotherhood upon which alone all true theosophical work is based. And we could not indulge in those reflections nor put forward that reason but for the knowledge that certain persons of weight and prominence in your ranks have given utterance hastily to expressions of pleasure that our change of government above referred to has freed them from nearly every one of the thousands of earnest, studious and enthusiastic workers in our American group of Theosophical Societies. This injudicious and untheosophical attitude we cannot attribute to the whole or to any majority of your workers.

Let us then press forward together in the great work of the real Theosophical Movement which is aided by working organizations, but is above them all. Together we can devise more and better ways for spreading the light of truth through all the earth. Mutually assisting and encouraging one another we may learn how to put Theosophy into practice so as to be able to teach and enforce it by example before others. We will then each and all be members of that Universal Lodge of Free and Independent Theosophists which embraces every friend of the human race. And to all this we beg your corporate official answer for our more definite and certain information, and to the end that this and your favorable reply may remain as evidence and monuments between us.

Fraternally yours,

(Signed) WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, *President.*

(Signed) ELLIOTT B. PAGE,
A. P. BUCHMAN,
C. A. GRISCOM, JR.,
H. T. PATTERSON,
JEROME A. ANDERSON,
FRANK I. BLODGETT,
*Members of the Executive Committee.*

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## THEOSOPHICAL LECTURERS.

ALL BRANCHES are not yet fully alive to the value of public lecturing. One of the objects of Branch meetings and discussions is to train members to think logically and intelligently express themselves on Theosophy, so as to

be of use in spreading its principles. A Branch should strive to become a centre around which other centres can be established. Each local T.S. is a fundamental part of the Movement; it should recognise that, and push ahead by striking out into all the towns and places around and near it. Members who can speak to an audience are invaluable in this work, for in this age the people receive ideas more readily from spoken words than from written ones. Indeed the taste for attending public lectures is growing daily. Those who have any germs of lecturing ability therefore should not hesitate to evolve them; and on this point it may be said that almost everyone if he tries can develop the faculty to some extent, for speech is natural to man. Theosophical lectures as far as possible should always be free. In many cases however collections could be taken up and expenses thus met.

## NOTICES.

For the future the FORUM will be issued as regularly as possible on the 15th of each month.

Difficult questions, or those of general interest discussed at Branches and not satisfactorily replied to, should be sent to the FORUM.

Branch Presidents are requested to see that lists of the members whose diplomas they have endorsed as valid under the new Constitution are sent to Headquarters.

Any member in doubt as to the real meaning, intention and scope of the Convention at Boston on April 28th should send to the FORUM whatever questions he may have, so that these points may be made entirely clear to all.

William Q. Judge's reply to the charges against him has been sent to every member in America. Any member requiring extra copies to hand to interested friends can have them on forwarding stamps to the office to cover postage.

The Lotus Circle Songs and Music noticed in last month's FORUM should be obtained from the *Path* Office, 144 Madison Avenue, and not from the League or Lotus Circle Superintendent. The music was arranged by A. Tregina of the Washington Circle, and it has been published at considerable expense.

The report of the Convention at Boston last April is now in the press and each member in America will have a copy in his hands within a few days. As this is a *verbatim* report of all the speeches and motions made at the Convention, it is expected that every member will carefully peruse his copy so as to be fully conversant with the *pros* and *cons* of the actions taken at this, the most important gathering of Theosophists yet held in any country.